

02/11/98
JCS15 U.S. PTO

Case Docket No. PHN 16,219

A

THE COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS, Washington, D.C. 20231

Enclosed for filing is the patent application of Inventor(s):
JOHANNES F.M. D'ACHARD VAN ENSCHUT

For: A METHOD FOR OPERATING A VIDEO GAME WITH BACKFEEDING A VIDEO
IMAGE OF A PLAYER, AND A VIDEO GAME ARRANGED FOR PRACTISING THE
METHOD

ENCLOSED ARE:

- ☒ Appointment of Associates;
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement, Form PTO-1449 and copies of documents listed therein;
- ☒ Preliminary Amendment;
- ☒ Specification (7 Pages of Specification, Claims, & Abstract);
- ☒ Declaration and Power of Attorney:
(1 Page of a [] fully executed [X] unsigned Declaration);
- ☒ Drawing (1 sheet of [] informal [X] formal sheets);
- ☒ Certified copy of EUROPEAN application Serial No. 97200421.2;
- ☒ Authorization Pursuant to 37 CFR §1.136(a)(3)
- ☐ Other: ;
- ☐ Assignment to

FEE COMPUTATION

CLAIMS AS FILED				
FOR	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE	BASIC FEE - \$790.00
Total Claims	8 - 20 =	0	X \$22 =	0.00
Independent Claims	2 - 3 =	0	X \$82 =	0.00
Multiple Dependent Claims, if any			\$270 =	0.00
TOTAL FILING FEE			=	\$790.00

Please charge Deposit Account No. 14-1270 in the amount of the total filing fee indicated above, plus any deficiencies. The Commissioner is also hereby authorized to charge any other fees which may be required, except the issue fee, or credit any overpayment to Account No. 14-1270.

[] Amend the specification by inserting before the first line as a centered heading --Cross Reference to Related Applications--; and insert below that as a new paragraph --This is a continuation-in-part of application Serial No. , filed .--, which is herein incorporated by reference--.

CERTIFICATE OF EXPRESS MAILING

Express Mail Mailing Label No. EM352554025US
Date of Deposit 2/11/98
I hereby certify that this paper and/or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" service under 37 C.F.R. 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231.

Fran Sofo
Typed Name

Fran Sofo
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S:\SEMTO4SECO.S00

[illegible]

Atty. Docket

PHN 16,219

Group Art Unit

Examiner:

Honorable Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

MICHEAL E. MARION (Registration No. 32,266)

ALL CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING THIS APPLICATION AND THE
LETTERS PATENT WHEN GRANTED SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE UNDERSIGNED
ATTORNEY OF RECORD.

Respectfully,

Dated at Tarrytown, New York
this 2nd day of February, 1998.

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of

Atty. Docket

JOHANNES F.M. D'ACHARD VAN ENSCHUT

PHN 16,219

Serial No.

Group Art Unit:

Filed: CONCURRENTLY

Examiner:

A METHOD FOR OPERATING A VIDEO GAME WITH BACKFEEDING A VIDEO IMAGE
OF A PLAYER, AND A VIDEO GAME ARRANGED FOR PRACTISING THE METHOD

Honorable Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Sir:

Prior to calculation of the filing fee and examination,
please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 3,	line 1,	change "Claims 1 or 2" to --Claim 1--.
Claim 4,	line 1,	change "Claims 1 or 2" to --Claim 1--.
Claim 5,	line 1,	change "any of Claims 1 to 4" to --Claim 1--.
Claim 8,	line 1,	change "Claims 6 or 7" to --Claim 6--.

IN THE ABSTRACT

Page 7, before line 1, delete in its entirety and
substitute the following centered
heading:

--ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE--;

	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100	2101	2102	2103	2104	2105	2106	2107	2108	2109	2110	2111	2112	2113	2114	2115	2116	2117	2118	2119	2120	2121	2122	2123	2124	2125	2126	2127	2128	2129	2130	2131	2132	2133	2134	2135	2136	2137	2138	2139	2140	2141	2142	2143	2144	2145	2146	2147	2148	2149	2150	2151	2152	2153	2154	2155	2156	2157	2158	2159	2160	2161	2162	2163	2164	2165	2166	2167	2168	2169	2170	2171	2172	2173	2174	2175	2176	2177	2178	2179	2180	2181	2182	2183	2184	2185	2186	2187	2188	2189	2190	2191	2192	2193	2194	2195	2196	2197	2198	2199	2200	2201	2202	2203	2204	2205	2206	2207	2208	2209	2210	2211	2212	2213	2214	2215	2216	2217	2218	2219	2220	2221	2222	2223	2224	2225	2226	2227	2228	2229	2230	2231	2232	2233	2234	2235	2236	2237	2238	2239	2240	2241	2242	2243	2244	2245	2246	2247	2248	2249	2250	2251	2252	2253	2254	2255	2256	2257	2258	2259	2260	2261	2262	2263	2264	2265	2266	2267	2268	2269	2270	2271	2272	2273	2274	2275	2276	2277	2278	2279	2280	2281	2282	2283	2284	2285	2286	2287	2288	2289	2290	2291	2292	2293	2294	2295	2296	2297	2298	2299	2300	2301	2302	2303	2304	2305	2306	2307	2308	2309	2310	2311	2312	2313	2314	2315	2316	2317	2318	2319	2320	2321	2322	2323	2324	2325	2326	2327	2328	2329	2330	2331	2332	2333	2334	2335	2336	2337	2338	2339	2340	2341	2342	2343	2344	2345	2346	2347	2348	2349	2350	2351	2352	2353	2354	2355	2356	2357	2358	2359	2360	2361	2362	2363	2364	2365	2366	2367	2368	2369	2370	2371	2372	2373	2374	2375	2376	2377	2378	2379	2380	2381	2382	2383	2384	2385	2386	2387	2388	2389	2390	2391	2392	2393	2394	2395	2396	2397	2398	2399	2400	2401	2402	2403	2404	2405	2406	2407	2408	2409	2410	2411	2412	2413	2414	2415	2416	2417	2418	2419	2420	2421	2422	2
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The above amendments are submitted to place this application in proper U.S. format. Entry is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted

By Mark E. Shi

By Michael E. Marion
Michael E. Marion, Reg. 32,266
Attorney
(914) 333-9641
February 3, 1998

S:\SE\PT03SEA0.SOR

A method for operating a video game with backfeeding a video image of a player, and a video game arranged for practising the method.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to a method for operating a video game, said method comprising the steps of:

- enabling a player to interact with a gaming environment,
 - 5 machine-detecting a score and/or performance of the player in a particular session,
 - backfeeding into the gaming environment a representation of said score and/or performance in visual form through an item that identifies the player in question.
- A method of this kind is known from GB 2,205,188. Generally, the game may be an arcade
- 10 game, a PC-based game that gets its software on a local CD-ROM player, or a network-based game that operates off-line and get its software through downloading. Various other configurations of such gaming environment are feasible. In a network environment, the game may be conducted off-line with a single player, off-line with multiple players, or even on-line with multiple players. The realization of the environment may be as conventional as a fruit
 - 15 machine, or high tech through using virtual reality features.

- Various people have seen the advantage of rewarding players in video games with the presentation of their identity. The above reference uses a printed ticket for outputting the name of a player alone or in combination with an attained score. The present invention has recognized that present day technology can attain a much higher degree of
- 20 liveliness, especially in view of falling prices of various devices. In particular, video aspects of such a gaming environment have been experienced as being interesting to user persons.

SUMMARY TO THE INVENTION

- Amongst other things, it is therefore an object to present the player with a
- 25 lifelike or video image of him or herself. Accordingly, the invention is characterized by automatically taking up a video image of the player in question as said representation for subsequent video display in said gaming environment. Compared with the remaining elements of the gaming environment that often comprise a great amount of electromechanical hardware, the price of a camera has fallen dramatically. Furthermore, confrontation of a

player with an other person's image being displayed in the actual gaming environment, has been felt as extremely tantalizing. The nature of the image may be a photograph or even a dynamic clip of the player.

Advantageously, the invention comprises a ranking step among players in
5 respectively successive playing sessions, and displaying images of high-ranking players in a relatively persistent manner with respect to subsequent playing sessions. In this manner, competition among various players is raised still further. Top players could have a display that is persistent over a relatively long period, such as one day or even one week.

Advantageously, for use in a multiple player environment, the video
10 image is selectively and cross-wise fed back to said multiple players. This enhances the competitive character of such a game still further: for example in a car-racing environment all players could have the face of the leading driver on their display during further racing.

Advantageously, the video image is made part of a composite image
together with selective items taken from memory. Such item could relate to a characteristic
15 attire worn in the real-life counterpart of the game, such as a space suit, or a particular interesting person related or not to the gaming environment in question, such as President Clinton or movie star Debi Moore.

Advantageously, the player person is allowed to suppress during the
session a presentation of said actual score and/or performance to said backfeeding
20 mechanism. This allows a person to remain anonymous if required; the realization can be effected through answering a system question by a keyboard command.

The invention also relates to a video game arranged for practising the
above method. Further advantageous aspects of the invention are recited in dependent
Claims.

25

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

These and other aspects and advantages of the invention will be discussed
more in detail with reference to the disclosure of preferred embodiments hereinafter, and in
particular with reference to the Figures wherein:

30

Figure 1 is a block diagram of a multi-player environment;

Figure 2 is an instantaneous representation of a game image together with
a player image.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

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Figure 1 is a block diagram of a multi-player environment. At left is the setup for the first player person. Here, item 22 symbolizes the user interface. As shown, it is a multikey-keyboard. However, various other such interfaces have become known, such as a joystick, a steering wheel, an electronic pinball interface as recited in US Application Serial
5 No. 08/823,577 (PHN 15.755) to the present assignee. In particular, the interface may be bidirectional. The signals from the user interface are sent to the local processing device 24. This local processing device generates an image on display 20. Furthermore, it sends a control signal to local camera arrangement 26 that is focused through lens 28 on the local player, or at least on a position where this player is supposed to be. The camera is attached
10 for sending the image information to local processing device 24. Now, in a stand-alone setup the processing device 24 calculates the score of the player. This score may represent the number of hits in a shooting game, the number of points and/or jackpot hits in a pinball machine environment, or other scores as applicable. In certain circumstances such as the gaining of a particular number of points, processing device 24 may transmit a command to
15 camera 26 so that an image of the player is taken up through appropriate focus and direction of lens 28. The image signals are digitized and transferred to central processing device 24 for more or less persistent storage in local memory that has not been shown separately. If the player would object against taking this image, at the beginning of the gaming session an appropriate command must be given upon a machine-generated question.

20 In a subsequent gaming session, the image so taken up can be displayed on display 20, for example, at the start of the session, or rather, during the evolution of the game as specified in the gaming rules. In case a plurality of pictures have been taken up during successive gaming sessions the processing device 24 through some kind of ranking mechanism may give preference to the image of a particular player in favour of other
25 images. The ranking mechanism may be permanent, for example in that always the top player of the last week has his image displayed. Other ranking strategies could introduce some random character in that the selection is made among a plurality of images.

At right in the Figure a similar setup is shown with corresponding items 30, 32, 34, 36 and 38. First, this second game could also represent a stand-alone
30 environment. Alternatively, competition between two simultaneous players could be introduced in that the two processing devices 24 and 34 are joined through some interconnection mechanism 40. The latter could be a local network, an interconnection to the Internet system or any appropriate item. Now, the two gaming sessions can be joined to each other, for example, in a racing duel. For example, the camera could take up the images of

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the driver that actually leads the pack, for display on all displays 20, 30. An alternative is that the images may actually figure in the game in that they actually become part of the game. For example, in a boxing game, the highest ranking player of a recent past could be superposed to the image of the actual player's opponent.

5 Figure 2 is an actual image of a racing game. The display device 60 has been shown with the actual image screen 62 in its centre. The image first contains the dashboard 64 of the driver (=player) in question. In front of the actual car the road 66 to be taken has been shown. Far out in front can be seen the car 68 of the driver that leads the pack. In the upper part of the screen, that may have a different aspect ratio from the one
10 shown here, various game parameters are displayed. First, field 70 shows the lag of the driver in question behind the leading driver, second field 72 shows an image of the face of the driver who is actually in front, and field 74 shows the driver that has covered the overall racing circuit in the shortest time. If the present player himself is actually leading the pack, either the field for the image of the leading driver is empty, or the image of the actual driver
15 is displayed.

At the end of the session, the image of the victorious driver may be printed, together with a textual identifier such as name or initials, and further relevant data, such as actual score, calender date, names of other players and their respective scores, etcetera. A particular feature is to join the image of the victorious driver with another image,
20 or even a clip taken from memory. By itself, the joining of images into a single picture is known technology, that is made easier and more natural if the camera through good focusing creates an image that has a well-defined circumference, so that a particular "hole" may be filled with an image taken from memory. The printing may be on paper or similar material, or even on a CD-ROM rewritable, if the game program had been provided on such support.
25 The printing may be effected remotely, such as on only one of the networked terminals of Figure 1. If applicable, the display may be in the form of a short movie fragment or so-called clip.

CLAIMS:

1. A method for operating a video game, said method comprising the steps of:
- enabling a player to interact with a gaming environment,
machine-detecting a score and/or performance of the player in a particular
5 session,
backfeeding into the gaming environment a representation of said score and/or performance in visual form through an item that identifies the player in question,
said method being characterized by automatically taking up a video image of the player in question as said representation for subsequent video display in said gaming
10 environment.
2. A method as claimed in Claim 1, furthermore comprising a ranking step among players in respectively successive playing sessions, and displaying an image of one or more high-ranking players in a relatively persistent manner with respect to subsequent playing sessions.
- 15 3. A method as claimed in Claims 1 or 2, for use in a multiple player environment, wherein said video image is selectively cross-wise fed back to said multiple players.
4. A method as claimed in Claims 1 or 2, wherein said video image is made part of a composite image with one or more selected items taken from memory.
- 20 5. A method as claimed in any of Claims 1 to 4, and allowing said player to suppress during said session a presentation of said actual score, performance and/or video image to said backfeeding.
6. A video game system being arranged for running a video gaming environment, comprising a user interface for enabling a player to interact with the gaming environment, detection means for detecting a score and/or performance of the player in question, backfeeding means for backfeeding into the gaming environment a representation of said score and/or performance in visual form through an item that identifies the player in question,
characterized by having camera means for automatically taking up a video

7. A system as claimed in Claim 6, furthermore comprising ranking means for relatively ranking players in respectively successive playing sessions, and control means
5 fed by said ranking means for displaying images of high-ranking players in a relatively persistent manner with respect to subsequent playing sessions.

8. A system as claimed in Claims 6 or 7, arranged for implementing a multiple player gaming environment, and having cross-wise communication means for selectively cross-wise backfeeding said video image to said multiple players.

7. A system as claimed in Claim 6, furthermore comprising ranking means for relatively ranking players in respectively successive playing sessions, and control means fed by said ranking means for displaying images of high-ranking players in a relatively persistent manner with respect to subsequent playing sessions.

8. A system as claimed in Claims 6 or 7, arranged for implementing a multiple player gaming environment, and having cross-wise communication means for selectively cross-wise backfeeding said video image to said multiple players.

ABSTRACT:

A method for operating a video game with backfeeding a video image of a player, and a video game arranged for practising the method.

- In a video gaming environment, a player is enabled to interact with the environment. Further, a score and/or performance of the player in a particular session is machine detected and fed fed back into the gaming environment and a representation of said score and/or performance is displayed in visual form through an item that identifies the
- 5 player in question. In particular, the method automatically takes up a video image of the player in question as said representation for subsequent video display in said gaming environment.

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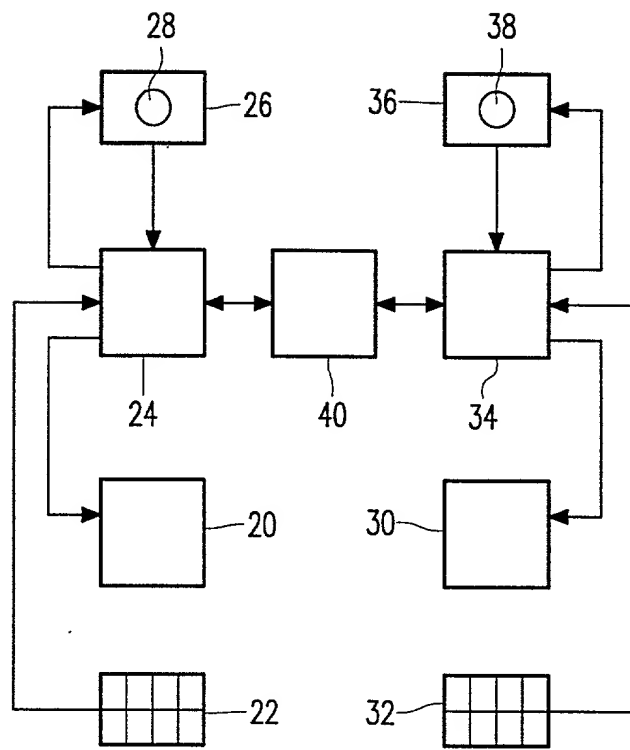


FIG. 1

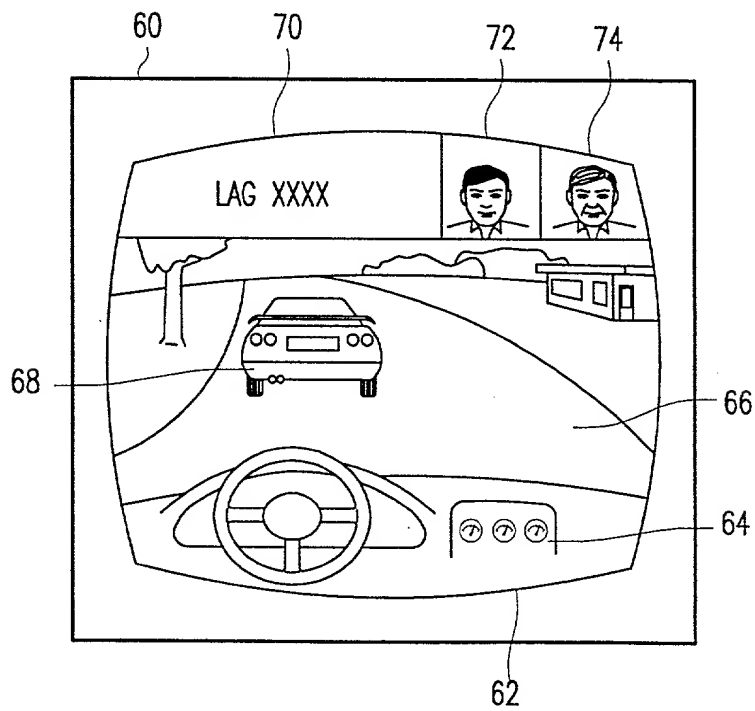


FIG. 2

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DECLARATION and POWER OF ATTORNEYATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO.:
PHN 16.219

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled
"A method for operating a video game with backfeeding a video image of a player, and a video game arranged for practising the method"

the specification of which (check one)

☐ is attached hereto.☐ was filed on _____ as Application Serial No. _____ and was amended on _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by the amendment(s) referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a).

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, § 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

PRIOR FOREIGN APPLICATION(S)

COUNTRY	APP. NUMBER	DATE OF FILING (DATE, MONTH, YEAR)	PRIORITY CLAIMED UNDER 35 U.S.C. 119
Europe	97200421.2	14 February 1997	YES

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35 United States Code, §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

PRIOR UNITED STATES APPLICATION(S)

APPLICATION SERIAL NUMBER	FILING DATE	STATUS (PATENTED, PENDING, ABANDONED)

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith. (list name and registration number)

Algy Tamoshunas, Reg. No. 27,677

Jack E. Haken, Reg. No. 26,902

SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO: Corporate Patent Counsel; U.S. Philips Corporation; 580 White Plains Road; Tarrytown, NY 10591		DIRECT TELEPHONE CALLS TO: (name and telephone No.) (914) 332-0222	
Dated:		Inventor's Signature:	
Full Name of Inventor	Last Name D'ACHARD VAN ENSCHUT	First Name Johannes	Middle Name F.M.
Residence & Citizenship	City Eindhoven	State or Foreign Country The Netherlands	Country of Citizenship The Netherlands
Post Office Address	Street Groenewoudseweg 1	City 5621 BA Eindhoven	State or Country The Netherlands Zip Code
Dated:		Inventor's Signature:	
Full Name of Inventor	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name
Residence & Citizenship	City	State or Foreign Country	Country of Citizenship
Post Office Address	Street	City	State or Country Zip Code

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